Need to introduce job-linked vocational courses

4000. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a great need to introduce job-linked vocational courses;

(b) if so, the States where such courses have been introduced; and

(c) the emphasis laid by the Central Government for funding the State Governments to set-up institutions for imparting, training and education for job-linked courses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (c) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Vocationalisation of Secondary Education launched in February, 1988, vocation courses have been introduced at the higher secondary level in selected schools. All State/UTs except Lakshadweep have joined the vocational education programme for which substantial financial assistance is provided by the Central Government.

Backlog of reserved seats in Railways

4001. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of posts reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are lying vacant in the Ministry of Railways;

(b) if so, full details thereof, category-wise, and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the backlog of the posts reserved for SCs/STs is likely to be filled-up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) As per Department of Personnel & Training's directives, a Special Recruitment Drive was launched during the year 1995 to wipe out the shortfall of vacancies reserved for SC/STs existing on 1.4.95 through direct recruitment. The shrotfall identified in the Special Recruitment Drive launched on 1.4.95 vis-a-vis the shortfall cleared by 16.7.96 and balance of vacancies is detailed below:

Particulars	Group C		Group D	
	SC	ST	SC	ST
Identified as on 1.4.95 for direct recruitment;	361	431	528	990
Cleared by 16.7.96	360	406	528	990
Balance of vacancies	001	023	Nil	Nil

The balance of 24 vacancies could not be filled up due to non-availability of SC/STs with requisite qualifications in technical categories viz. Pharmacists, Staff Nurse, Stenographers, Radiographers, etc.

(c) For clearing the balance shortfall of Special Recruitment Drive-1995 and the shortfall existing as on 30.6.96, another Special Recruitment Drive has been launched from 15.7.96 to be completed by 31.3.97.

Monitoring of Water quality of Godavari river

4002. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the water quality of the Godavari river at Kovvur and